

Administrative Rule 9.03.17

SUBJECT: AUTOMATIC SPRINKLER AND STANDPIPE SYSTEMS	EFFECTIVE DATE:
REFERENCES: SFC Chapter 9 NFPA 13 NFPA 13R NFPA 13D NFPA 14	SUPERSEDES: Administrative Rule 9.03.14, October 21, 2014
	FCAB REVIEW DATE: February 21, 2017
Notice: Administrative Rules are established per Seattle Fire Code Section 104.1, and they are subject to the Administrative Sections 104.9 Alternate Materials and Methods, Section 104.8 Modifications, and Section 108.1 Appeals.	APPROVED: CHARLES CORDOVA, FIRE MARSHAL

Section 1. SCOPE

This Administrative Rule provides additional and/or modified requirements for automatic sprinkler and standpipe systems beyond those found in the referenced documents. All of the sprinkler requirements apply to NFPA13 and 13R systems, unless stated otherwise in specific sections of this rule. The only item applicable to NFPA13D systems is Item 2.1.

Section 2. SPRINKLER REQUIREMENTS

- 2.1. A ten psi reserve 'cushion' between the available water supply pressure and the system design demand pressure is required. The reserve 'cushion' is not required for the hose allowance that is added to the demand flow at the sprinkler system point of connection to the water supply.
- 2.2. Sprinkler protection shall be provided in elevator shafts with elevators using combustible suspension means (belts) that do not provide at least an FT-1 rating, and in machine rooms and elevator pits for elevators having combustible hydraulic fluids. The sprinklers shall be installed in accordance with Seattle Fire Department Administrative Rule 9.06.14 (Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections Director's Rule 7-2014).
- 2.3. Sprinkler protection shall be provided under areas of buildings where above-grade floors extend more than four feet beyond the exterior wall below, and in recessed entries or exits more than four feet deep.

Exceptions:

1. Sprinkler protection is not required under such areas described above where the construction meets one of the NFPA 13 provisions to omit sprinklers below exterior projections, and the area below is limited to pedestrian circulation, seating or landscaping.
 2. Sprinkler protection is not required under such areas described above where the underside of the building extension is 20 feet or more above grade, or floor level.
 3. Sprinkler protection is not required under such areas described above for NFPA 13R sprinkler systems.
- 2.4. Sprinkler protection shall be provided under exterior projections such as balconies, decks and ground floor patios where there is a roof or deck above having a combined projection and/or building recess of more than four feet in depth. Where the depth varies, sprinkler protection is only required for those areas with depths more than four feet.

Exceptions:

1. Sprinkler protection is not required for exterior balconies, decks or ground floor patios on floors with Group B occupancies where the construction complies with one of the NFPA 13 provisions to omit sprinklers below exterior projections.
 2. Sprinkler protection is not required under projections for NFPA 13R systems in buildings that are not type V construction.
 3. If located over storage of combustible materials, the depth at which sprinklers are required is reduced to two feet.
- 2.5. Sprinkler protection shall be provided under non-combustible canopies on roofs over open flame cooking devices. Sprinkler protection is required over the open flame cooking device and 15 feet beyond.

Exception: Sprinkler protection is not required under canopies for NFPA 13R sprinkler systems.

- 2.6. Sprinkler protection shall be provided at each main floor landing in exit enclosures and stairways.
- 2.7. Sprinkler protection shall be provided under solar photovoltaic arrays located on roofs of buildings.

Exceptions:

1. Sprinkler protection is not required under solar photovoltaic arrays on roofs, when the arrays are located near the roof level and not considered weather protection for occupants or storage, regardless of the array construction.
2. Sprinkler protection is not required under solar photovoltaic arrays used as weather protection if the canopy is not located over storage of combustible materials or over open flame cooking devices, and the construction of the array and supporting structure complies with one of the NFPA 13 provisions to omit sprinklers below exterior projections.

2.8. Sprinkler protection may be omitted from spaces above cloud ceilings when permitted by Section 8.15.24 of the 2016 Edition of NFPA 13.

2.9. Protection of individual storage units located in common use areas of a building shall be in accordance with one of the following:

1. Sprinkler heads installed within each storage unit.
2. Sprinkler protection is not required within each unit when in compliance with all of the following:
 - a. The unit does not have full height solid walls. The top of the unit walls shall be such that the walls do not violate the NFPA 13 obstruction rules for the sprinkler heads in the vicinity of the storage units.
 - b. The floor area of the unit is within the coverage area of sprinkler heads located outside the unit.
 - c. The solid portion of the storage unit walls do not violate the obstructions rules of NFPA 13.
 - d. Wire mesh of a minimum thickness of 11-gage shall be installed horizontally across the top of the unit at least 18 inches below the level of the sprinkler head to restrict the height of storage.
 - e. No storage is allowed on top or above the wire mesh. The mesh shall not be covered with plastic sheet or other obstructions to the sprinkler discharge pattern.
3. Sprinkler protection is not required within each individual storage unit when the room or area is provided with an Extra hazard Group 2 sprinkler system. The sprinkler design is permitted to be limited to the room only, regardless of the fire resistance rating of the room walls. If the storage units are not within a room, the sprinkler design shall extend 15 feet beyond the units. Sprinkler heads shall be spaced based on the location of the room walls, not the front on the storage units.

2.10. Existing sprinkler pipe in areas being remodeled and consisting primarily of sprinkler relocations may retain the existing methods of hanging, bracing, and restraint. New or relocated branch lines, cross and feed mains shall be provided with hangars and seismic bracing conforming to current standards. See 2.12 for projects that are a substantial alteration.

2.11. New sprinklers heads being installed in existing light hazard occupancies are required to be quick response heads. Projects that are a substantial alteration shall comply with Section 2.12..

Exception: Remodel projects with existing standard response sprinkler heads that affect less than 30% of the sprinkler heads within a compartment are permitted to use standard response heads throughout the compartment. If any sprinklers within a compartment are changed to quick response then all of the sprinklers within the compartment are required to be changed to quick response.

- 2.12. Sprinkler systems in projects determined by the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections to be a substantial alteration shall be upgraded to meet all applicable current code requirements.

Exception: If an alteration is substantial only because it is a change to a more hazardous occupancy, compliance with this section is only required if the life hazard risk increases as determined by Chapter 3 of the Seattle Existing Building Code.

- 2.13. Provide a contrasting label on the door to the sprinkler control room that reads "SPRINKLER CONTROL ROOM" in minimum one inch letters.
- 2.14. All control valves shall be installed in accessible locations and be visible from the floor without removing or moving ceiling panels or other visible obstructions. Accessible locations shall not require access through hatches or the use of portable ladders. Valves located more than seven feet above a floor shall be provided with a permanent means of accessing or operating the valve such as a ladder or chain-operated hand wheels. Valves shall not be located within dwelling units.

Exception: Valves are permitted to be within dwelling units in single family residences and duplexes.

- 2.15. Fire pump room construction and separation from other areas of the building shall be in accordance with NFPA 20 and Seattle Building Code Section 913.2.1. Fire pump rooms not directly accessible from the outside are not required to be accessible through an enclosed passageway from an enclosed stairway or exterior exit.
- 2.16. Supply mains for automatic sprinklers may be located under building slabs for a maximum length of ten feet.

Exception: Combined domestic and fire supplies are not limited.

- 2.17. Hose stations are not required to be installed in high pile storage occupancies.

Section 3. STANDPIPE AND FIRE DEPARTMENT CONNECTION REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1. Class I standpipes may be manual dry standpipe systems in non-high rise buildings.

Exception: Where wet standpipes are required in underground transportation tunnels.

- 3.2. The 2½-inch outlet installed in cabinets shall be turned so that it faces out of the cabinet.
- 3.3. Fire department connection inlet ports shall be 2½-inch swivel female couplings with national standard thread.
- 3.4. A fire department connection with a minimum of four 2½-inch inlet ports shall be provided for six inch and larger standpipes. Standpipes with two 2½-inch ports are acceptable on standpipes with pipe sizes of four inch and smaller.

- 3.5. All fire department connections shall be located at least ten feet away from primary building exits.
- 3.6. In accordance with Seattle Fire Code Section 507.5.1.1, buildings equipped with a standpipe system are required to have a fire hydrant within 100 feet of the fire department connections. The distance may be increased to 400 feet where the building is sprinklered throughout and the fire department connections are not more than 400 feet from a hydrant.
- 3.7. Caps on 2½-inch outlet valves shall incorporate a 1/8-inch hole for pressure relief.
- 3.8. Fire department connections for NFPA 13 or 13R systems in townhouse style or similar residential buildings may be omitted when each townhouse or dwelling unit has a separate sprinkler system with separate water supply service for each unit, and where any common areas requiring sprinkler protection can be protected by sprinklers from the individual dwelling units (such as by using sidewall sprinklers or dry pendants) without needing to provide a separate sprinkler system for common area coverage.
- 3.9. All control valves shall be installed in accessible locations and be visible from the floor without removing or moving ceiling panels or other visible obstructions. Accessible locations shall not require access through hatches or the use of portable ladders. Valves located more than seven feet above a floor shall be provided with a permanent means of accessing or operating the valve such as a ladder or chain-operated hand wheels. Valves shall not be located within dwelling units.

Section 4. HIGH RISE REQUIREMENTS

- 4.1. Dual/redundant automatic refill lines, each capable of refilling the tank at a minimum rate of 150 percent of the fire pump(s) capacity, shall be provided for the on-site water storage tank. Each refill line shall have separate tank fill valves arranged for automatic operation. Each automatic tank fill valve shall be provided with a separate approved means of actuation such as float assemblies, pressure sensors, etc. that are supervised by the fire alarm system. The status of the valves (i.e., 'open', 'closed') shall be indicated at the valves and in the Fire Command Center (FCC). The tank shall be kept filled, and the water level shall never be more than four inches below the designated fire service level.

Exception: Automatic fill systems are not required when two fire pumps are installed, one primary and one secondary. The primary fire pump shall be supplied by a dedicated fire service main and the secondary fire pump supplied from the storage tank. The pumps shall operate at the same rated flow capacity and at similar discharge pressures. A manual means to fill the tank shall be provided and sized to fill the tank in a maximum time of eight hours. The tank shall be kept filled, and the water level shall never be more than four inches below the designated fire service level.

- 4.2. An approved means to prevent the tank from overflowing into the building shall be provided. Where an automatic shutoff valve is provided, it shall be listed for fire service and have dual (redundant) means of actuation such as two float assemblies, pressure sensors, etc. that are supervised by the fire alarm system. The valve shall be supervised by the fire alarm system and status (i.e., 'open', 'closed') indicated at the valve and in the FCC.

Exception: Overflow prevention is not required when there is no automatic fill system installed, as permitted in the exception to Section 4.1.

- 3.3. Two tank level indicators shall be provided, one located in the FCC and another in the immediate vicinity of the tank fill valves. The tank level indicator monitoring shall be provided through the fire alarm system in accordance with NFPA 72. Two separate and distinct signals shall be initiated: one indicating that the required water level has been lowered or raised (off-normal), and the other indicating restoration. The off-normal signal shall be initiated when the water level falls three inches or rises three inches.
- 3.4. Separate and distinct tank low level audible and visible alarms shall be provided in the FCC and in the vicinity of the tank fill valves. The alarms shall be activated when the tank water level drops below 50% capacity. The tank low level monitoring shall be provided through the fire alarm system in accordance with NFPA 72. The signaling devices shall be clearly labeled "Water Tank Low Level Alarm" or equivalent. An independent silence switch shall be provided for the tank low level alarms in the immediate vicinity of the alarm devices.
- 3.5. A full size by-pass shall be installed around the storage tank and the fire pump in accordance with NFPA 20. The by-pass shall be installed on the supply side of the tank fill valves and connected to the system on the downstream side of the fire pump and any sprinkler system pressure regulating valves installed on feed mains.

Section 5. INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS

- 5.1. Standpipes shall be hydrostatically tested at a minimum of 200 psi for two hours at the topmost outlet, or 50 psi above the design pressures in the system whichever is greater.
- 5.2. The standpipe flow test is not required during system acceptance testing or thereafter. However, flow testing of any pressure reducing devices is required at acceptance and in accordance with maintenance testing requirements.
- 5.3. Hydrostatic testing is required for sprinkler system modifications where pipe greater than two inches has been altered.
- 5.4. Seattle Fire Department inspection of all overhead sprinkler piping, hangers, sway bracing, etc. prior to cover or concealment is required. Escutcheons or covers for concealed sprinklers must be left off for inspection purposes. Additional inspection after installing the covers is not required. Call (206) 386-1443 between 8:00 and 9:00 AM to schedule fire department inspection after the work is complete but before cover.
- 5.5. The fire department must inspect all joints, thrust blocks, tie-rods, etc. for new underground pipe prior to cover, and witness the hydrostatic test and flush prior to connection of the sprinkler system to the supply piping. Minimum depth of bury for underground piping shall not be less than three feet. The use of existing pipe for new systems shall be subject to inspection or flow test to determine the extent of tuberculation within the pipe.

Exception: Sprinkler systems supplied with a combined domestic/fire main metered by a domestic service meter. Flushing of combined domestic/fire mains shall be documented on the appropriate Contractor's Material and Test Certificate.

- 5.6. Completed Contractor's Material and Test Certificates for Aboveground Piping and Underground Piping, signed by an authorized representative of the installing contractor, must be provided to the fire department inspector prior to final acceptance of the sprinkler system.
- 5.7. For backflow preventers installed outside of buildings, contact the Seattle Public Utilities Water Quality Inspector at (206) 233-2635 at least 48 hours in advance to schedule backflow prevention assembly inspection prior to fire department final inspection/acceptance testing. For backflow preventers installed inside buildings, call (206) 233-2621. The installation of a backflow preventer requires a permit from and inspection by the Environmental Health Services Division of King County. Permit and inspection information can be found at:
<http://kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/ehs/plumbing/downloads.aspx>. See also:
http://www.seattle.gov/util/myservices/water/water_quality/crossconnectioncontrol/

Section 6. PLAN SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

- 6.1. Submittals shall include all information required by NFPA 13. Plans must include water supply information from a flow test conducted within ten years in close proximity to the project site and in the same pressure zone and on the main to be tapped for sprinkler protection. For existing water supply information, or to schedule a flow test with SPU, go to: <http://www.seattle.gov/util/forbusinesses/water/waterservice/installwatermains/hydrantflowtest/>
- 6.2. Submittals are not required for relocation or addition of six or fewer devices on an existing system. Call (206) 386-1443 between 8:00 and 9:00 AM to schedule fire department inspection after the work is complete but before cover.